

Worksession

Agenda Item #	4
Meeting Date	5 March 2007
Prepared By	Sara Anne Daines HCD Director
Approved By	Barbara B. Matthews City Manager

Discussion Item	Old Takoma Business Association Update and Request for Funding
Background	<p>Main Street Takoma program, an initiative of the Old Takoma Business Association, is a community-based effort aimed at keeping and increasing the vitality of the Old Takoma commercial district which extends from the Takoma Junction in Maryland to the Takoma Theatre in Takoma, DC. Its vision for Old Takoma is to “create a small town in a big city - welcoming and diverse, practical yet fanciful with places to meet, shop, learn, eat, create and rejuvenate.”</p> <p>The Old Takoma Business Association (OTBA), which receives an operating subsidy from the City in support of its Main Street program, has asked for an opportunity to provide the Council with an update on its activities and to present a request for an extension of the operating support the organization receives from the City.</p> <p>Attending the worksession on behalf the organization will be OTBA Officers Penney Jones - Napier (President) and Ethan Landis (Secretary); Board Members John Hume (Design Committee Chair) and Dan Robinson (Economic Restructuring Committee Chair); and Executive Director, Roz Grigsby.</p>
Policy	<p>“The viability of the Old Takoma district is important to the economic health and quality of life of the community and its continued improvement and revitalization is a local economic development goal.”</p> <p>An excerpt from Resolution of Support for the Designation of Old Town/Takoma Junction as a Maryland Main Street</p>
Fiscal Impact	<p>A total of \$75,000 in operating subsidies - dispersed equally over a 3 year period - was authorized by the City Council in support of OTBA’s Main Street initiative. This subsidy ends this fiscal year (June 30, 2007). The association is requesting a 3-year extension of this subsidy with the same terms and conditions as originally approved.</p> <p>The original subsidy required a 1:1 match with not more than one half of the match provided on an in-kind basis. The organization has satisfied its matching requirement in each of the past three years.</p>
Attachments	OTBA - Old Takoma Main Street materials (March 2, 2007)

Recommendation	To consider the update provided by the association and discuss its request
Special Consideration	

Old Takoma Business Association—Main Street Takoma Outlook for 2007

Façade Improvement Grants

We have received Façade Improvement Matching Grants of \$90,000 from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, leveraging \$180,000 of improvements for Old Takoma, Maryland in a three-year period. We are committed to completing \$50,000 in projects in Old Takoma in 2007, half of which will be covered by the façade improvement grant money.

- 3 projects have been completed at 7071 Carroll (Savory), 7009 Carroll (Shampoo) and 6921 Laurel (Park Florist);
- 1 application has been approved and work is underway at 7040 Carroll (House of Musical Traditions)
- 2 applications pending;
- 12 more businesses and commercial property owners requested and received application materials.

Physical Appearance of the Business District:

We are improving the general physical appearance of the business district through the following activities:

- Adopt A Tree program;
- Active trash and graffiti removal and education efforts;
- An on-going weeding program for street landscaping;
- Two Community Clean-up Days, April 28 and October 20, 2007;
- Initiating discussion with MNCPPC on Gazebo Park for 2008 improvements
- Storefront Window Display Improvement program

Surveys and Outreach

- We have conducted a business inventory and business survey.
- We have created a parking inventory and are working with City and County staff on parking options for existing and new businesses.
- We have completed an on-line survey of residents' preferences for local businesses and restaurants and are currently compiling the results to be made public.
- We have established an ad hoc committee to advise and give feedback on business plans for start-up or expansion efforts by local businesses.
- We conduct outreach to commercial property owners and we are expanding outreach to other non-profit organizations in the Old Takoma area.
- We are promoting Old Takoma to potential businesses and restaurants to encourage them to locate here.

Promotional Events:

Takoma Park Street Festival;

Pajama-rama

Dog Days of Summer

December Holiday open house

Winter Festivities.

Weekly events, same time and location, to highlight the Old Takoma area.

Educational Events:

We host monthly general meetings, free and open to the public, on a wide array of topics of importance to our local businesses and the community.

Websites:

www.mainstreettakoma.org

www.takomaonline.com

www.takomafestival.com

Partnering with Community Groups and Businesses

We work with an entirely volunteer board and committees, and attract many additional volunteers for specific projects, including residents from the neighborhood associations, teens working for community service hours, and professionals donating their skills. Members of our committees are also part of other community groups, boards of directors, businesses and city staff, which helps achieve shared goals and helps disseminate information.

We work collaboratively with many community organizations and neighborhood associations:

- We are engaged in ongoing talks with Safe Takoma to collaborate on issues of community crime reduction.
- We've highlighted Old Takoma in collaboration with Ecco Park's new development and assisted in identifying the kinds of businesses desirable to the residents here.
- We are working to highlight Takoma Park events in collaboration with the TP Folk Festival, TP Film Festival, TP Jazz Festival, Home and Garden Tour (*Gazette* ads).

We are expanding our outreach to additional stakeholders in the community, including local churches, schools, youth and recreation programs.

**Request to Takoma Park City Council for Continued Funding for OTBA
March 5, 2007**

A Review of 2006

City of Takoma Park contribution: **\$ 25,000**

Old Takoma Business Association, 2006 contribution:

a. Sponsorship funds 2006	\$ 21,000
b. Membership 2006	\$ 6,059
c. Board Volunteer hours: 1800 x \$18/hr	\$ 32,400
Committee Volunteer hours	\$ 17,280
Total Volunteer Contribution	\$ 49,680
d. In-kind contributions 2006	
Web site development and hosting	\$ 10,230
Ceramic tiles for membership,	
Adopt A Tree, Golden Roscoe Award	\$ 8,000
Advertising	\$ 2,200
Diorama Design	\$ 3,300
Total In-Kind Contributions	\$ 23,730

OTBA Match—Total **\$100,469**

Additional OTBA contributions:

Façade Improvement monies spent	\$ 5,425
Additional Façade Improvement money allocated	
To OTBA by MD Dept of Housing	\$ 84,575

2007 Façade Improvement Grant money to be spent **\$ 25,000**

Leveraging \$50,000 in property improvements

Event attendance: approximately 15,000

OTBA/Main Street Accomplishments for 2006:

- a. Website development and update

- b. Information of commercial properties for sale or lease on website
- c. Economic Restructuring Committee property owner outreach
- d. Promotions such as Takoma Park Street Festival, Winter Fest
- e. Spring and Fall Clean Up
- f. Adopt A Tree program with care and watering of 22 trees
- g. Golden Roscoe Window award program in December
- h. Successful Façade Improvement grant application obtained \$75,000 in matching funds from Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
- i. Advertising: group ads for Metro Station diorama, *City Paper*, *Gazette*
- j. Workshops: see attached list of events
- k. Parking survey, discussion with City and County governments on options
- l. Partnerships with Historic Takoma on Architect on Call grant, Safe Takoma, and Takoma Park Seventh Day Adventist Church on Winter Fest
- m. Community consumer on-line survey

OTBA/Main Street Outlook for 2007

We are looking forward to accomplishing these expanded or additional projects:

- a. Increase membership (currently 25 % above 2006 level)
- b. Develop resource lists for technical assistance for business owners
- c. Reimburse up to \$25,000 of Façade Improvement funds
- d. Continue partnership with Safe Takoma, Historic Takoma, other community groups
- e. Support and promote the Art Walk/Open Studio tours
- f. Promoting local artists with exhibits in empty store windows,
i.e. Taliano's, Elevation 314
- g. Brochures to highlight local shops, parking, restaurants, publicly-available restrooms
- h. Quarterly Diorama ads at Metro stations/bus stations
- i. Collaboration with Long Branch Business League and Takoma-Langley Crossroads
- j. Continuing programs like Adopt A Tree, Golden Roscoe Award, Winter Fest
- k. Continued workshops to enhance our local businesses.
- l. Develop additional sources of revenue, like an antiques market.

Partial Calendar of Events for 2007

- 1/9/07 "Making Public Art Work for the Old Takoma Commercial District"
- 2/13/07 Safety and Crime Prevention (Postponed due to inclement weather)
- 3/13/07 Safety and Crime Prevention—rescheduled
- 4/10/07 Developing a Website for Your Business—Bevi Chagnon
- 4/28/07 Main Street Spring Clean-Up Day
- 5/8/07 Future of Old Takoma—Roundtable discussion lead by Dan Robinson
- 10/7/07 Takoma Park Street Festival
- 10/20/07 Main Street Fall Clean-Up Day
- 11/30-12/2/07 Holiday Open House

List of OTBA Events and General Meetings 2006

- 1/10 Get involved in Old Takoma's Future!**
OTBA General Meeting, highlighting Main Street Committees
- 2/14 Start Your Valentine's Day Right**
OTBA General Meeting, Networking session sponsored by Landis
Construction: Presentation by Bruce Levin, Keystar Real Estate, Proposal
for 7001 Carroll Ave.
- 3/14 Free Breakfast Food with a Large Side Order of Information**
OTBA General Meeting, Networking Session by the Takoma Voice;
Presentation by Lex Ulibarri, Alternative Metro Development proposal
- 6/13 OTBA General Meeting**
Guest speakers: Sabrina Baron, president of Historic Takoma, Inc.; Anna
Hartelius, Ecco Park; Julie Paez on RepeatRewards; Networking session
sponsored by Middle Eastern Cuisine
- 7/11 How to Get a Bounce out of the Street Festival**
OTBA General Meeting, Networking sponsored by Sligo Creek Tile Co.
- 8/8 OTBA Goes Wireless!**
Guest Speaker: Dean Steinman
OTBA General Meeting, Networking Session, sponsored by Amano
- 8/29 Workshop on Street Festival Strategies for Effective Booths**
Bevi Chagnon, Sponsored by Summer Delights
- 9/12 The Small-Mart Revolution: How Takoma Businesses Can Beat the
Global Competition, Michael Shuman**
OTBA General Meeting, Networking sponsored by Elite Personnel
- 10/1 Takoma Park Street Festival, Carroll Avenue in Historic Takoma**
- 10/10 The Buyology of Marketing—5 Steps to Increase Your Sales**
Marti Campbell and Bobbie Kittner
OTBA General meeting, Networking Session by Takoma Metro Shopping Center
- 10/27 How to Get through the Paperwork and on to the Beautification!**
Façade Improvement Grants Seminar: Karen Ashby, MDHCD, Division
of Neighborhood Revitalization; Antonio Deans, MDHCD, Small business
loans

- 11/14 Independent Merchants Can't Miss a Beat!!
Merchandising Your Business**
Casey Wilson, Maryland Small Business Development Center
Sunrise Seminar—OTBA General meeting, hosts Main Street event with
Long Branch and Hyattsville
- 12/12 OTBA Annual Meeting and Holiday Party**
Awarding the Golden Roscoe Award for Best Holiday Windows
- 12/15 Old Takoma Winter Festivities**
to Music groups scheduled to perform at the Gazebo
12/23 December 15: Montgomery Blair High School Choral group
December 16: Metropolitan Washington Baha'i Chorale
December 17: 18th Street Singers
December 18: Brass Quintet of the Takoma Park Community Band
December 19: Takoma Park Baptist Church
December 20: Takoma Park Singers
December 21: Foggy Bottom Morris Men
December 22: Paint Branch Unitarian Universalist Church Choir
December 23: Promised Land Baptist Church
Music groups scheduled to perform at the Ecco Park location
December 15: Fire Dancers
December 16: Paul Public Charter School Dancers
December 17: Yusef Douglin, percussion
December 18: Capital Accord Chorus
December 19: Coolidge Senior High School Band
December 20: Washington Ethical Society
December 21: Solstice Singers
December 22: Ms. Belle, children's songs
- 1/9/07 OTBA General Meeting:
Making The Arts Work For Downtown**
OTBA General Meeting
Panel discussion moderated by Jose Dominguez,
Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Commission